

MARYLAND TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION
Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

The following meeting occurred on Tuesday, February 21, 2017, commencing at 1:09 p.m. at the Maryland Transit Administration, 6 St. Paul Street, Baltimore, MD 21201.

ATTENDEES

Eric Backes	MTA Representative
Peggy Ann Clark	Attendee
Edward K. Cohen	Attendee
Thomas Curtis	Attendee
Liam Davis	CAC Co-Chair
Cecilia Davoli	CAC Member
Sequoia Distance	CAC Member
Denise Hagans	MTA Representative
Jacquetta Hagler	MTA Representative
Marlene Hendler	Attendee
Nancy Huggins	CAC Chair
Roderick Jenifer	Attendee
Miss Joi	Attendee
Rabbi Levitt	Attendee
Claudia Lindsey	Attendee
John W. Mack	CAC Secretary
Tracy Shuford	Attendee
Ron Skotz	CAC Member
Fremont Sturtevant	CAC Member
Ross Turlington	MTA Representative

Absent:

Judy Bellamy	CAC Facilitator
Linda Greene	CAC Member (Excused)
Osh Oshitoye	CAC Member (Excused)
Jean Pula	CAC Member (Excused)

AGENDA

- I. Meeting Called to Order
- II. Welcome and Introductions
Approval of the January 17, 2017 Meeting Notes
- III. Office of Governmental Affairs Update
Eric Backes, Deputy Director, Office of Governmental Affairs
- IV. Baltimore Link Update
Tom Hewitt
- V. West Baltimore Transit Center Update
Ross Turlington, Special Assistant to the Administrator
- VI. Committee Reports
 - Mobility
 - Legislative Affairs and Customer Service
 - Infrastructure and Planning
 - Title VI and Safety
- VII. Old Business
New Business
- VIII. Public Forum Questions
- IX. Meeting Adjourns

PROCEEDINGS

The meeting was called to order at 1:09 p.m.

Nancy Huggins started introductions and told people how to apply to become members of the committee.

Meeting Minutes Approval: There is not a quorum so minutes cannot be approved, approval of minutes tabled until the following (next month's – March, 2017) meeting.

Office of Governmental Affairs Update

Mr. Eric Backes explained that he works with the Office of Governmental Affairs (OGA) and the Secretary's office to assess priorities, work with Legislators on legislation and give input during legislative hearings. He offered the following items relevant to transportation:

1. House Bill 1010 designed to create MTA oversight was passed by Senate but vetoed by Governor Hogan. OGA does not think that there are enough votes to override the Governor's veto.
2. Senate Bill 25, introduced by MDOT and MTA, clarifies that MTA could use "Uber and Lyft" services in emergency situation for Call A Ride. The bill is moving through the House and Senate legislative process. Currently, the bill is in the House awaiting a scheduled hearing date.
3. Budget hearings with MTA are February 23rd at 9 a.m. in the Baltimore City Delegation Room.
4. Senate subcommittee hearing with MTA is February 27th at 2 p.m. in the Schweinhaut Room.
5. House Bill 21/SB 44 is to repeal MTA fare box recovery metrics but includes goals and new formulae. Backes explained that the thrust of OGA's position is they do not believe the metrics accurately reflect what a Mass Transit Agency should aspire to. There are vague terms, legal terms that do not mesh with the realities of how MTA operates, some that conflict with the Baltimore Link plan as an example, like the OTP metrics. Note, MTA is not in opposition to this Bill, however the hearing is scheduled for tomorrow.

General discussion followed: Mr. Edward Cohen's comment: The concern seems that there would be new metrics and MTA couldn't meet them or they would have to reduce service to meet them. MTA did not oppose repeal but the metrics this year. Lierman made it clear they were not mandates; that they were goals and the old mandate would still be retained. Lierman said, "They would be willing to modify or replace them." Mr. Backes said, "OGA is meeting with Lierman to discuss the bill." Even though, they are goals it creates an assumption on MTA that we will try to get to goals even if they do not mesh with our plans for what our transit system will be.

6. Baltimore Link: OGA is spending the legislative session trying to educate legislators on Baltimore Link and what is to come. They are having a breakfast on March 16th for

legislators and staff to educate them. Ms. Sequoia Distance asked what Mr. Backes' sense is of legislators' attitude toward Baltimore Link is. Mr. Backes said, "It does not seem on that this issue is on their minds yet, but overall the impression is positive." OGA is pushing neighborhood associations to talk to legislators on March 16th.

Baltimore Link Update: Mr. Hewitt was not able to attend, so there is no update this month.

Subcommittee Reports

- **Legislative Affairs and Customer Service:** The committee has been following the legislative session, and is working with the MTA on Statewide issues. Mr. Ron Skotz explained that there are a few things that are particularly important statewide:
 1. Senate Bill 963 which is sponsored by Senator Magdaleno, is basically very similar to getting rid of the 35% required fare box recovery rate. They are proposing that only Prince George's and Montgomery counties move away from the 35% but they would have a mandated minimum that they would have to contribute to the state.
 2. House Bill 1552. The Ubers and Lyfts of the world have become major players and have a tremendous advantage over taxi companies since they run at will without any oversight. Under this bill they will have to register with the Comptroller's office as a business, and be regulated by the Public Service Commission. It would also include criminal background checks for all drivers.
 3. House Bill 627 aims to make Mobility and paratransit type operations to be tax exempt from state tax. We feel confident that it will pass. The administration here has been very helpful. It is not a huge amount of money. In the city of Baltimore mobility services would be eligible for refunds of up to \$1 million annually. Across the State it would be around \$1.2 million. It's a redistribution of funding and no tax increase.
- February 23rd is the budget hearing for House.
- February 27th is the budget hearing for Senate.

Questions:

1. Mr. Cohen: What is the number of the bill with flat rate for fare box recovery?
Mr. Skotz: Senate Bill 963. They say get rid of 35%, but they will not lose any money the way they calculated it.
2. Mr. Cohen: How would the Lierman bill passing affect that one? Wouldn't it be redundant?
Mr. Skotz: If you get either passed, you're alleviating the 40%. Both bills have performance measures, but people who do not understand transit have applied them.

Comments:

1. Mr. Tom Curtis: There is a housing development called Berger's Square that has accessible housing, but didn't have a bus stop. Mr. Ron and the RTA made it happen.

- **Baltimore Link:** Friday is Baltimore Link Subcommittee meeting at 11 a.m.

Ms. Hagans said, "The new Baltimore Link brochure is available."

- **Title VI and Safety:**

Mr. Liam Davis asked Jackie Hagler to be at their next meeting so that someone from Title VI is there. He will meet with her to come up with a date.

Mr. Davis asked CAC where they want the Title VI subcommittee to direct efforts. Ms. Hagler said, "The direction is Title VI compliance with new routing with BaltimoreLink and Commuter buses.

Ms. Huggins asked if Hagler gets complaints and if she can bring them to the subcommittee. Ms. Hagler said, "She can't if it involves litigation. She showed the group the Title VI implementation program manual that had to be submitted March 1st." MTA is doing a co-plan with MDOT that covers 2017-2020. All business units under MDOT that receive federal funding have to present a Title VI plan to show what they will do to prevent discrimination.

Mr. Edward Cohen commented that he has spoken with Ms. Hagler and Mr. Tom Hewitt about how the evaluation standards for Title VI were written well for evaluating local bus routes, but not for express bus routes. They should be rewritten. Ms. Huggins said, "The Title VI subcommittee should look at that issue."

- **Mobility Subcommittee:** No meeting.
- **Infrastructure and Planning:** Ms. Marlene Hendler read a resolution that the committee wants to be sent to CAC and MTA. Ms. Huggins wants to know what CACAT wants CAC to do about it. The subcommittee will work on typing up the resolution and distributing it.

West Baltimore Transit Center Update

Mr. Ross Turlington asked to give a presentation with images of the artwork at next month's meeting. He will provide the different final art examples. Ms. Huggins said, "Were five wonderful choices that we will probably see elsewhere."

Old Business: None

New Business:

1. Mr. Davis requested MTA to provide ridership data by route to the committee for their review. Mr. Davis also requested any visuals that are available that can support the ridership data be provided as well. Mr. Cohen added that we could get the latest information by route and get up-to-date information system wide.

Ms. Huggins said, "She thinks with BLink that should be easier." In the meantime, we could see ridership monthly. Ms. Hagler said, "She has ridership by mode, broken down by ethnicity, socioeconomic data."

2. Mr. Davis revisited a previous request by CAC to have the Committee minutes posted online. Mr. Turlington said they will be, currently just working on the technical aspect of accomplishing this.

Public Forum Questions

BaltimoreLink concerns with the 104

1. **CAC and Baltimore Link:** Ms. Tracy Shuford asked what does CAC do on behalf of citizens for Baltimore Link?

Ms. Huggins explained that CAC was involved in the planning process and members were able to make comments and encourage comments throughout the region that BLink would be introduced to. As a whole, the CAC was able to take a look at the pending routes, bus stop signage and stop placement. CAC's next step is once it's completed is to be part of the marketing plan. The day they flip the switch June 17th and someone waiting for bus may be waiting for different bus and time. CAC has the responsibility to help push out info to respective communities.

Mr. Cohen added that CAC has had input on every aspect and MTA has really listened. He has never seen such a great example of the MTA taking public input. The Baltimore Link plan has gone through three iterations and each change had major changes and that's due to public input. Mr. Cohen said, "He applauds the MTA for reducing the ambition of the Baltimore Link plan to make sure it serves the people who are dependent on it."

2. **Losing the 104:** Ms. Claudia Lindsey explained that she and Shuford came to address the committee for people who ride the 104 which is disappearing and for people who use the 3 since it won't come up to Cromwell Bridge anymore. Mr. Cohen said, "No. 3 will but not as frequently." Ms. Lindsey said, "The MTA needs to hear them." They are worried about losing their jobs at Hopkins due to the new bus routes. When they went to the community hearings there was no mention of the 104. Ms. Lindsey wrote an email and hasn't received a response. Shuford added that the 104 gets them to work at Hopkins in 20-25 minutes, but Baltimore Link will double that time.

Ms. Huggins pointed Ms. Shuford and Ms. Lindsey to Mr. Turlington for further comment.

3. **Baltimore Link Publicity:** Mr. Rabbi Levitt commented that if Baltimore Link launches June 17th, there is little time for education. He has not heard anything on the radio about it and the only public relations he has seen is around the bus or at bus stop.

Ms. Huggins said, "The next meeting, there will be a plan of action for education or Baltimore Link. There are a series of public hearings scheduled for information sharing.

Mr. Turlington added that once the system is finalized there will be an increase in the literature.

Announcements/Comments

- The next CAC meeting is March 21 at 1 p.m.
- Ms. Huggins said, "We never had a quorum." Mr. Mack said, "We need 8. Mr. Turlington suggested that the CAC bylaws had been revised (By MTA) on updated quorum rules; he will investigate and share his findings at the next committee meeting."

The meeting is adjourned at 2:19 p.m.